Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Cancelled)
12. (Cancelled)
13. (Cancelled)
14. (Cancelled)
15. (Cancelled)
16. (Original) A method for degating a plurality of molded parts that are connected to a runner via gates, said method comprising:

causing a robot arm assembly to position the plurality of molded parts and the runner proximate to a source of ultrasonic energy;

pressing the runner against said source of ultrasonic energy; and

activating said source of ultrasonic energy so that the plurality of molded parts is degated from the runner.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising causing said robot arm assembly to discard the runner.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising activating the robot arm assembly to remove the plurality of molded parts and the runner from a molding tool prior to said causing.

19. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein said pressing comprises causing said robot arm assembly to press the runner against said source of ultrasonic energy.

20. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising permitting the plurality of molded parts to drop from the runner to a collector after the plurality of molded parts is degated from the runner.

21. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein said robot arm assembly comprises a carrier assembly configured to hold and carry the plurality of molded parts and the runner.

22. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein said source of ultrasonic energy is an ultrasonic horn.

23. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein said carrier assembly comprises at least one piston assembly configured to press the runner against said source of ultrasonic energy.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein said at least one piston assembly comprises a piston having a groove configured to permit at least a portion of the runner to be positioned therein.

25. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein said carrier assembly comprises at least one suction device.

26. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein said carrier assembly comprises a gripper configured to grip a portion of the runner.

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Cancelled)

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Original) A method for removing from a molding tool a plurality of molded parts that are connected to a runner via gates and subsequently degating the plurality of molded parts from the runner in a single phase operation, said method comprising:

activating a robot arm assembly to remove the plurality of molded parts and the runner from the molding tool;

causing said robot arm assembly to position the plurality of molded parts and the runner proximate to a source of ultrasonic energy;

pressing the runner against said source of ultrasonic energy so that when said source of ultrasonic energy is activated, a standing wave of mechanical vibration is transferred along the runner to the gates;

activating said source of ultrasonic energy so that the plurality of molded parts is separated from the runner; and

causing said robot arm assembly to discard the runner.